


THE **Quill**

**A MAGAZINE FOR
WRITERS, EDITORS,
AND PUBLISHERS**



Scientists and Newspapermen Discuss
Difficulties in Dealing With Each Other

A Symposium

So Passes the Polemiste

By G. H. Archambault

I've Been Writing for Boys

By Robert S. Mansfield

Free Lance—If You Must

By R. E. Wolseley

The Book Beat • Who-What-Where • As They View It

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THE QUILL

A Magazine for Writers, Editors and Publishers

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At Deadline—R. L. P.	2
So Passes the Polémiste—G. H. Archambault	3
I've Been Writing for Boys—Robert S. Mansfield	4
Free Lance—If You Must—R. E. Wolseley	6
Scientists and Newspapermen Discuss Difficulties in Dealing With Each Other	8
The Book Beat—Conducted by Mitchell V. Charnley	11
Who—What—Where	12
Editorials	14
As They View It	14

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AT DEADLINE

THOUGH it might be considered journalistic enterprise by some, it seems to me that the photographing of a former President of the United States in his casket and the publishing of the resulting picture in portions of the nation's press is not in the best of taste.

Perhaps you saw the picture to which I refer. Perhaps you didn't.

It would appear proper to have a photograph of the bier itself, banked with flowers and with its guard of honor standing at attention. There would be something of dignity, something of respect there. But for a photographer to poke his camera over the edge of a casket and snap the shutter—it just doesn't seem the thing to be done.

THE tactics of cameramen at funerals do not shed any luster on journalism. Why should the widow and other relatives of a public figure have to walk the gauntlet of a struggling, shoving horde of cameramen at the very door of the church where services have just been held for a loved one? Why is it considered necessary that they be photographed at such a moment?

News reels of the recent funeral of former President Coolidge showed the difficulty with which relatives, President Hoover and others made their way through the crowd of cameramen. Not that the photographers were disrespectful or deliberately unkind. Some one higher up had issued orders to get pictures—and those orders had to be obeyed if jobs were to be held.

The camera has its place in the recording of the funeral of a prominent figure—in photographing the procession, the salutes, the crowd along the line of march and other phases. But the photographing of the features of the deceased and the harassing of mourners as they leave the home or church seems unjustified.

AGAIN the *World Almanac* makes its appearance and one is impressed anew with the amazing amount of information packed within its covers. Small wonder that the *Almanac* is found on the desks of so many newspapermen and other writers who strive to be accurate. What a lot of information for a few cents! I don't see how anyone connected with writing can be without it.—R. L. P.

SO PASSES THE POLEMISTE

Leon Daudet Alone Remains as Standardization of the Press
Brings an Era of Personal Journalism in France to a Close

By G. H. ARCHAMBAULT

STANDARDIZATION of the newspaper, which affects both writer and reader, is working journalistic changes in all countries. In France, for one thing, it marks the passing of the *polémiste*. There seems to be but one left—Léon Daudet. And he is past 60. There are no signs of the advent of a younger school of the craft. More's the pity!

What is a *polémiste*? He is essentially European, more singularly Latin. In fact his name is not easily rendered in English. "Polemic" is the classic word, but it leads to confusion as it means both actor and action. "Polemist," which would be convenient, is rejected by standard lexicographers, "polemicist" is cumbersome. So let it be *polémiste*.

What is he? He is not an editorial writer although he writes editorials. Neither is he a columnist although he has a daily column. He would be a gladiator were his opponent tangible. He is a man with great power of invective, a past master of vituperation, a coiner of epithets, a keen dialectician; cultured, disdaining neither wit nor humor, Rabelaisian on occasion, rhetorical for the classes and familiar for the masses, he has at his command withal outstanding literary gifts. Of course, he signs all his writings. Indeed, once a *polémiste* has made his mark the signature may become the more important part.

BEING all this, the *polémiste* is a virtuoso. In the view of the reader whose critical faculty has not been dulled by standardization, the danger is that he may develop into the virtuoso who harps on one string. For the polemical gladiator is in the class of

the shadow boxer. Each day and every day, to vary the simile, he must find a Goliath for his sling. In course of time, inevitably, many of the ogres he smites are mere men bloated by his imagination. Goliaths are rare, so that the *polémiste* inflates a bladder to shape a giant. It serves his purpose excellently, blows on a bladder make much noise.

It follows that a *polémiste* is always in opposition. To assail polemically has popular appeal, for the people at heart are "agin" all governments; it is easier, more amusing and more satisfying than to defend polemically.

So that each day the *polémiste* takes from his store one or other of his puppets—the presentments he has made of public men—and proceeds to castigate. He pummels and cudgels, smacks and thwacks, until his truculence is spent. Then the victim, sufficiently belabored, is laid by for future punishment. The art of the *polémiste* lies in that the castigation seldom bores, seldom jades. The plot is ever the same but the action differs. Wherefore *polémistes* are born, not made.

The *polémiste* must be ready to

wield all weapons, literally as well as figuratively, for it may happen that the victim rebels and challenges to an honor-avenging duel. After the supreme tragedy of the war, duelling more than ever partakes of comedy, and pinking a wrist is rarely the sequel to polemics nowadays. But the *polémiste* must know the rapier play of argumentation. He must use the saber to hack and the battle-axe to cleave; the quarterstaff to break a pate and the singletstick to beat a tattoo on the ribs. And he must be adept with the slapstick, too, for comic relief to his thrusts. The while, like a Homeric hero, he hurls insults at the foe.

THAT he may not surfeit the reader with his feuds, the *polémiste* writes occasionally of the arts and sciences, thereby proving his versatility. Whatever the subject, his technique is such that he seldom exceeds one thousand words. Were he prolix he would cease to be a *polémiste* and revert to the status of his ancestor, the pamphleteer.

The descent is in direct line; the evolution was caused by the invention of the rotary press and the coming of the low-priced newspaper. Thus the *polémiste* is a product of the Nineteenth Century. He is, in fact, a newspaper pamphleteer, and he is passing because the modern newspaper is far removed from the pamphlet.

More than any other, French journalism developed the *polémiste*. That was at the time when individuality was an asset for a newspaper. Now that French journalism is like every other

G. H. ARCHAMBAULT, a Frenchman, is perhaps the only European who, having never set foot in America, has been for 30 years interpreting Europe to America from the American viewpoint.

In Paris, he has been managing editor of European editions of American newspapers and in more recent times correspondent for both newspapers and news services. He was an understudy of James Gordon Bennett on the New York Herald, in Paris, and later founded the Paris Times.

The impeccable English M. Archambault displays in the accompanying article should make many American newsmen extremely envious. Hundreds of young American newspapermen have taken sound lessons in American newspaper practices, especially in the writing of good English, from this Frenchman! He was a hard-boiled editor of the old school. Those who escaped summary dismissal esteemed him as a great editor.

M. Archambault says that he acquired his knowledge of English by "reading exclusively the advertisements in American papers and magazines." But he modestly adds that he has yet much to learn before he can write good English.

He is at present on the Paris staff of the Chicago Daily News.

(Continued on
page 13)

I've Been Writing for Boys

By ROBERT S. MANSFIELD

The great work drum was pounding rhythmically in the compound as Brad Jordan, nineteen-year-old owner and manager of the Haitian coffee plantation, descended the steps of his bungalow . . .

(From the author's work. . .)

SO, emerging upon his veranda, Bradshaw Jordan was launched upon the career of adventure that was to carry him through more than 250,000 words of juvenile fiction and to carry me through divers periods of financial stress.

When I wrote "Black Arrows," pointing it in a general way toward the vast and then unknown (to me) market of juvenile magazines, I suppose my feeling was one of "oh, well, writing for kids should be easy—maybe I can get in by that door!" The yarn was a 3,000-word short story built around material I'd gathered from a government ethnologist who had spent four seasons in the Haitian back country. I sent it, full of confidence, to the *American Boy* from which the copy returned with a bump that jarred my second cousin in Passaic, New Jersey. George Pierrot, managing editor of the *American Boy*, had taken the trouble to tell me what was wrong with the story from a weak typewriter ribbon to an equal weakness in the matter of putting action into an adventure plot. It took him two pages, and Mr. Pierrot is saving of words. It occurred to me that writing for the junior magazines was no such pipe as I had believed it.

But Mr. Pierrot was kind. He wound up his letter with the suggestion that I rewrite the story, buy a new ribbon, and give the thing a try at one of three markets which he mentioned, even giving me permission to use his name in the letter accompanying the story.

THAT rejection got my back up. I appreciated the criticism, but it rankled to know that I couldn't put across so "simple" a thing as a juvenile story. It became evident that writing for juveniles was a job to be taken seriously, and, once having made a try at it I was determined to make the grade or burn out all the bearings in my typewriter. "Black Arrows," re-

Not Such a Pipe

WHEN Robert S. Mansfield, author of the accompanying experience article, first set out to write fiction for boys he thought he was tackling something easy—then came the awakening.

His account of his experiences may prove useful to readers of *The Quill* wanting to enter the field of fiction through the juvenile writer's gate.

Mr. Mansfield, a graduate of the University of Michigan, has been a newspaperman, a correspondent, a free lance and an itinerant motor tourist. He is at present an instructor in journalism in the University of Washington.

vised, sold to the *Haversack*, teen-age boys' magazine published by the Methodist-Episcopal churches, South, and brought me my first check for fiction: Twenty-two dollars and fifty cents!

Edwin B. Chappell, Jr., then in charge of the *Haversack*, was another kindly editor. His letter of acceptance suggested their future fiction needs, intimating that they could use a serial of from six to eight chapters. A 25,000-word serial went forward to him within a week, and this time I had taken the job seriously. I tried to put myself in the place of the readers—to catch what would interest them and hold their attention. I even tried—Lord forgive me!—to write what was good for them.

After that there was no question about my addiction to writing for the junior magazines. I found a definite joy in turning out stories of swash-buckling adventure unhampered by the conventions of sex-laden glamour demanded by many adult markets. The story was the thing—the story and the unusual setting I provided for it. Brad Jordan became a living boy to me, and his side-kick, Willy Lewis, was no less real. Their conversation was a matter of automatic writing, and their behavior in a given situation was predetermined because I knew them both, intimately. It became a matter of throwing Brad and Willy into a jam of sorts—any sort—and then allowing them to work their way out of it. In the seven serials and score of short stories in which they have appeared, only twice have I known in advance

what the eventual denouement would be. I did try another planned story for them, but they ran away with the plot and came out seven points west of the destination I had selected for them.

The boys liked Brad and Willy, and in their letters to the editor or sent directly to me lay the greatest joy in writing for them. They were not all enthusiastic—different boys like different yarns—but through them all ran a note of sincerity which made their praise heart-warmingly convincing and their criticism worth while. No factual error escaped them—boys have far-flung hobbies, and they know whereof they speak. Their unremitting demand for accuracy kept me constantly on my toes in gathering material, and never once have I had an arbitrary objection to a debatable point. They're outspoken, alert and alive, and they take their magazine fiction seriously; adults do not.

OPPORTUNITIES in the field of junior magazines are not so limited as a casual consideration would lead a new writer of fiction to believe. Check over the list of juvenile markets in any good market guide and note the total of publications. Their word rates are comparatively low, but with a good number of contacts, a reasonable income can be worked up.

Competition these days is strong. More and more people with time on their hands or lack of money in the bank or both are turning their efforts to remunerative writing in one form or another, and as a result the desks of editors in the juvenile field as well as others are crowded with copy from newcomers. Much of it is good copy, acceptable copy, and since the magazines are confronted with the same shortage of cash which interferes with the joys of all of us, they are inclined to get their copy at the lowest figure compatible with printable stuff. This means an unusual opening for the newcomer, but it also means added work for reduced staffs of readers and a general slowing down in the matter of response to copy submitted. At the moment, a serial of mine has been in the hands of an independent juvenile magazine for six months; four months after receiving it the editor wrote me that it had just reached his

This Author of Juvenile Fiction Shares Experiences Gained in Weaving Stories for Sunday School Papers

desk and would be held (with my permission!) for decision later.

Two groups go to make up the bulk of juvenile fiction markets: the independent publications such as the *American Boy*, the *Open Road for Boys*, plus the Boy Scout, Girl Scout and Campfire Girls' magazines in one classification and the Sunday school juveniles in the other. Because it is a field beyond my personal ken, I will avoid reference to the story papers and parent-child magazines devoted to children under 12 years of age.

MEMBERS of the independent group constitute the mythical "top of the market" in juveniles. Their rates are higher than those of the Sunday school papers, but it must be noted that the practice of issuing weekly magazines on the part of the latter makes an expanded market for the ambitious free-lance. My own start came in the Sunday school group, and it is in that field that most of my sales have been made. It has kept me busy, since for the most part I work on fiction in spare time while another job makes more certain the appearance of bread, beans and bacon on the family table. On two different occasions I have tried to make free-lancing the sole means of support, but during those ill-starred periods I found that my income from writing diminished from the figure it had maintained when the work was a spare-time avocation.

Why? At first I couldn't get it, but aside from potential earnings in a single limited field, it seems to me that lack of contacts in active affairs allowed my mind to go stale. Certainly the copy I turned out was not so straightforward and active as that which

comes out of the mill when every day brings new contacts and mental stimuli.

Methods of writing vary with the individual, but there is one forerunner of the actual writing which it is permissible to pass along without the onus of telling someone else how to do his own stuff. Simply, it's read the publication at which your copy is aimed. You have the plot in mind—what magazine will it fit best? If you have studied the markets at all you'll have a hunch. Read that magazine and make up your mind; then read it some more until you have assimilated its particular style and content. Don't plan to ape it, but try to write the type of thing they want. Then go ahead.

Had I known that trick before shipping out my first serial, "The Treasure of Fond au Blanc," both Mr. Chappell and I would have been saved considerable trouble. He had written that they wanted an adventure serial, and I went right ahead without considering the fact that each juvenile magazine has a particular set of

taboos to which it adheres rigidly. My story again was set in Haiti, and I introduced a bit of native torture which was quite within the possibilities of the situation. I wish now that I could have seen Mr. Chappell's face when he read that. He was nice about it and gave me a chance to remove the offending items, but the re-writing resulted in delay in receiving the check and in the publication of the story. The latter meant that my next story for him must wait a proportionately longer time. It pays to do it right the first time and no editor can be blamed for rejecting copy which has not been written to fit the requirements of his publication.

THERE are tricks in every specialized type of writing, but I honestly believe that strict formula is less effective in juvenile than in adult fiction. My line has always been the action-adventure story whether pitched in tropical jungles or within the brick confines of an ice cream plant.

The brief length limits of the juvenile field—3,000 to 4,000 words for the Sunday school group and up to 5,000 words for the independents—frequently mislead the writer into the pitfalls of the single incident story. In this regard I try to hold to a formula of sorts: that of including three rising climaxes in every short story. In serials, each chapter must conclude the high peak of its predecessor, contain one complete climax and bring the story to another high point before allowing it "to be continued."

The problems of plotting and structure which confront the writer have so many ramifications that any discussion longer than straight-

(Continued on page 10)

IF YOU WANT TO WRITE FOR BOYS—

ANYONE wanting to attempt the writing of fiction for juveniles, observes Robert S. Mansfield, author of the accompanying article, may find the following suggestions useful:

Make the story unsubtle without "writing down."

Maintain high moral tone without preaching.

Find plots without:

- (a) Money lust.
- (b) Love interest.
- (c) The sordid.
- (d) The out-and-out villain element.
- (e) The "Holier than thou" element.
- (f) Virtue triumphant for its own sake.
- (g) Gory combat for its own sake.
- (h) The repentant villain and his sobbing confession of faith.
- (i) The tear-stained cheeks of the brave old mother.
- (j) The last-minute run for a touchdown.
- (k) The noble athlete who (obviously) loses rather than cheat.

Give characters sufficient balance to keep them human.

Write humor at once appealing to young readers and not obvious.

Adhere rigidly to all facts not obviously parts of the fiction.

FREE LANCE—IF YOU MUST

By R. E. WOLSELEY

EVERY newspaper man, publicity writer, magazine editor, or other victim of the journalistic bug, has at some time or other in his life, according to tradition, the yen to cut loose from his job, become his own boss, and try to make a go of it as a free lance.

Under an adequate economic system such a decision might be made voluntarily. Under our present economic chaos erroneously called a system, such a decision is frequently a necessity. As many issues of *THE QUILL* in past months show, not a few journalists of all degrees of ability and experience have been thrown on the mercy of the world by an economic system which seems to disregard not only personality but all too often human welfare as well.

A Chicago *Evening Post* cannot make the financial grade, so 200 employees are added, overnight, to the millions of American unemployed, and a handful of experts is retained by the Chicago *Daily News*, the *Post's* purchaser. Such a situation is common these days. What are our so-called best minds doing about it? Agreeing that the system is wrong and needs readjustment? Hardly. Many of them not only fail to supply a remedy for a sick society but will not even admit that the society is seriously ill!

Out of the ranks of the editorial workers who outnumber jobs hundreds to one come the persons who are the subject of this article—the free lancers.

JOBS being as rare as pacifists in the D. A. R., these men and women, mostly men, gaze with new affection at the good old portable, put in a stock of white paper and yellow second sheets, dust off the copy of "Free Lance Writing Taught in Seven Days" and start grinding out short stories, book reviews, trade journal articles, essays, household hints, contest entries, novels, treatises on the durability of straw flow-

ers, and other grist for the journalistic mill.

Such, at least, was my situation when, in October, 1931, the railroad publicity and house organ office in which I worked received word from the higher-ups that it would have to bungle along without me. From the year of free lancing that followed and from the seven years of spare time free lancing that preceded it, I have of course reached a number of conclusions, a few of which I want to set forth here. Possibly I have no right to generalize from these conclusions:

1. For most of us, the rewards of free lancing, other than monetary, are all that we have been told they are.

2. For most of us, the monetary rewards of free lancing are not to be taken seriously.

3. The advice about preparing manuscripts neatly, enclosing return envelopes, and other mechanical details is not to be overlooked, even though commonplace.

4. Free lance writing is harder work than most newspaper or magazine jobs.

5. The most successful free lance (meaning most widely read, not necessarily highest paid) is that one who has some professional connection that makes him an authority.

6. One should find his specialty by working in various forms.

7. The best methods and practices of the merchant must be cultivated by

the free lance (or his agent) in conducting the business end of his work.

Elaboration of these points is based on personal experience. With the Editor's recent assurance that use of the personal pronoun is not to be frowned upon I proceed with less than usual hesitation.

THE excitement and nervousness that attended the receipt of my first free lance check has not been forgotten in eight years and it probably will remain as a milestone for some time to come. It was for only \$16, but I photographed it. The satisfaction of receiving actual money for something I have written has not decreased in importance since. It has, on the contrary, increased. The thrill of seeing my words in print, of receiving letters about the articles I have written, of (apparently) influencing the ideas of others with my own, are all rewards which help to make the life bearable. The liberty from routine, the greater range of one's interests, and the ever-changing adventures that attend a free lance career are sweet advantages that compensate for many hardships.

Except for the man of many talents or for the man who has dumped professional ethics overboard and will write any sort of tripe, the monetary rewards are negligible. There are not many of us who can write best-seller novels occasionally, produce some

column or other feature that gives us a \$35,000 annual contract, sell articles to the ten-cents-a-word weeklies or the quality street magazines, or sell short stories at \$2,000 each. Most of us have to be content with \$10, \$15, or \$25 for a trade journal yarn or \$3 for a book review, or \$35 for an article or a pamphlet, or one cent a word for pulp fiction. As for some of us free lancers, if it were not for our wives, we would be on charity. That is all the more true when the world is in the economic dumps

LEST it be made to appear through *The Quill* that the life of a free lance is one without briers, some of the less rosy aspects are discussed in the accompanying article by R. E. Wolseley.

Mr. Wolseley has contributed to *The Quill* before, the other occasion being in July, 1931, when a biting article telling of the less attractive features of the house organ field appeared under the title "House Organ Discords." The article was signed by a pseudonym, "Fred Welch."

The passing years have been busy ones for Mr. Wolseley since his graduation from Northwestern University in 1928. He has done newspaper work in Pennsylvania and Illinois, spent three years in publicity work and as house organ editor for one of the largest railroad systems, contributed as a free lance to nearly 50 magazines in the United States, England, South Africa and India during 1932 and at present is teaching journalism at Mundelein College, while continuing his free lancing. He also taught at Northwestern one summer.

He is the co-author of two journalism textbooks which are to be published next spring, one intended for college use and the other for high schools.

It's a Life That Has Its Drawbacks as Well As Its Attractions, This Writer Warns You

The man who can make \$3,000 a year as a free lance writer usually has little time for anything else in life, unless he be a specialist. Becoming a specialist is a matter of years, generally speaking, so that the effect is the same. The one-or-two-talent man cannot depend upon making a full-sized, taxable income. How many among us do not, in our secret minds, admit that after all we are either one-or-two-talent men?

BUT if we must do it full time or have a schedule which permits free lancing at odd moments, we should heed the oft-repeated advice of our predecessors. Manuscripts hardly ever leave my "studio-office" (meaning the one-and-a-half-room apartment which serves my wife and me as living room, dining room, library, den, office, parlor, and what have you) with dirty creases, torn edges, or numerous corrections. Neither do they go without a stamped and addressed envelope to insure their return. Most manuscripts, when they do come back, spend very little time with me between trips. I try to send every manuscript to all publications in the field. This may mean from one to 30 journeys. This persistence has been worth while. I have placed manuscripts several times on the thirteenth trip, despite superstition. The beginner, at least, should follow the best procedure in these mechanical details. Once he is an established writer he can break such rules with impunity.

Production has been far more easy for me in a newspaper or publicity office than it has been as a free lance. In an office there are many helps to make work easier. There are the habits of work which office routine develops. There is the day-by-day responsibility. There is the pressure of a regular boss. There is the competition inspired by fellow workers.

But as a free lance one may work for 16 hours a day for three or four days, eating and sleeping irregularly and insufficiently. Then may come a two- or three-day period of enforced idleness. The mental and physical adjustments are by no means easy to make. Having the direction of one's own plan of work is distracting, and what is worse, very tempting. The laziness that may have been overcome by office routine now gains its grip on one. For example, the alarm can be

set an hour later. The dangers of this are obvious. A handicap the seriousness of which can be appreciated fully only by someone who has been through it is that produced by one's dependence upon the mail. One will be driven almost to nervous prostration by the silence of editors, either in reporting on manuscripts, or in making payment for accepted or printed work.

THE free lance, in the earlier stages at least, must do most of the work himself. He must interview many persons, perform his own research, do his own typing and mailing, keep his own records, get his own pictures, and contain within himself the machinery for his whole company. In order to pay the rent, he must do, not what he has long yearned to do, but many writing jobs he despises or is bored by. Instead of working on that novel or play, he feels that he must write an article on the uses of glue in trunk manufacturing and accordingly spends a day or two in that odoriferous task. The temptation to side-step the glue article and work on that short story or poem is difficult to resist and unless one can convince the landlord, the grocer, the butcher, the tailor, and the druggist that one deserves a year's credit or more, disaster is bound to come.

The number of personal letters from editors of prominent magazines that came to me with rejected manuscripts last summer was far more than I had received before or have since. There is no mystery to it. I was on the faculty of a large middle western university and wrote my covering letters on office stationery. It was assumed, erroneously in most cases, that I was an authority on something or other because I was teaching something or other.

The advantages of this are nevertheless imaginable. I do not doubt that some of the manuscripts I placed last summer were taken because of that professional connection. This, alas, is a condition which I do not necessarily sanction. The general public (and the editors who edit for it and not for posterity) are, it seems, more likely to take seriously the opinions on the American political situation coming from a university teacher of engineering than the opinions of an unattached free lance who is an expert on American politics.

THIS leads into the suggestion that the beginning free lance may discover in himself ability as a writer of fiction (under which one includes short stories, novels, plays, and poetry) or as a reporter for trade journals and house organs, or as a writer of essays if he can afford to try his hand at all of the various forms. Some of them require years of practice. The more difficult should be continued over a long period. Learning the technique of the trade journal article, the popular short story, the book review, and the other simpler types of writing can be developed to a productive point in a short time. This may keep the bills paid while the great American novel is being written.

The business details of the free lance may bore him or they may serve to inspire him. I am my own agent and handle everything, primarily because working in the field of non-fiction as I am I have limited markets for each article and do not expect my main source of income to come from magazine free lancing. I keep a card file of my manuscripts, recording on each card the title, wordage, number of photographs accompanying, if any, to whom sent, when, when returned, price, when accepted, and the comment made on the article by the accepting or rejecting editor. While an article is in circulation the card for it is kept in one box, when it is taken the card is put in another, if rejected and withdrawn in still another. Thus I know the condition of my working stock at any time. I keep carbons of all manuscripts, filing them in folders as the cards are filed. I have a large market guide, kept up to date by inspection of all sources of market news. I keep a record, for income tax purposes, of all receipts, although I have not yet succumbed to Arnold Bennett's trick of recording wordage for the year. I keep a file, for ready reference, of all available published material. All correspondence, whether it be no more than a rejection slip, is kept in letter files by years.

In the year of full time devoted to free lance writing I have found all these suggestions to be helpful and they have made the task of collaborating on two journalism texts, preparing a pamphlet, and writing about 50 articles a relatively pleasant one.

Scientists and Newspapermen Discuss D

Our Intentions Are Good

By WILLARD SMITH

Wisconsin Bureau, the United Press

IN discussing the handling of scientific stories and scientific findings by newspapers and by associations, I want to assure the representatives of science with one positive statement—the press is guided by good intentions in reporting. From some past experiences, some scientists have been led to doubt it.

By presenting the side of the newspaper, I may be conducting a short course for scientists. If it is true that a reporter needs some understanding of science in order to report science stories, it seems to me the scientist who submits to an interview should have a little knowledge of the problems of the newspaper.

For example, demand for speed and accuracy is just as much a part of the newspaper business as is the painstaking care and the check and double-check of the scientist in his research. It is essential to the welfare of the relations between science and the press that scientists understand this demand for speed.

IN the press association with which I am associated, we serve some 1,200 newspapers in all parts of the country. We have newspapers' deadlines to meet and opposition scoops to contend with. We congratulate ourselves if we beat the opposition by 15 minutes. Once a story is in print, the opposition is checking up, and it does not take them long to get back to the source and get a story of their own.

That is why reporters have no respect for hours, calling in the middle of the night, etc. Where reporters do call you scientists or other people to the 'phone, at what might not be decent, respectable hours, try to treat them as if they hadn't gotten you out of your sleep.

In the matter of 'phone reporting, it is important that no man give details and especially scientific facts over the 'phone to the reporter unless he gives a face-to-face interview first. Check back right away to understand definitely that the reporter has done it in perfect order, that he will not go amiss

on the basis of the notes that he has taken. I never resent a man saying, "Now are you sure you have that correct? Let's check it back."

It is not always the reporter's fault. I have known men of science who found it difficult to give information in simple English, who so crowded things with technicalities that when it came to putting them before the public it became extremely difficult.

MY sympathies are not all with the reporter. I have some ammunition for editors. You can't expect every newspaper or press association bureau to maintain a science expert on their staffs, but they can and should send their best men to you for your stories.

I have had newspaper experience in three university cities, and in every one of those cities I have seen this so-called student reporter problem popping up. It seems that students who are working in newspaper offices, because they are near the campus, often get the call on campus stories. Their stories come into the newspaper office and a re-write man tries to make them better. He may never check back on the facts. The press association gets a carbon copy of the story—it puts it out. The professor, a little later, sees the story. He 'phones down frantically. He wants something done about it, because he may appear silly. There are things that can be done to prevent that.

First, take a tip from the smarter politicians. Always put your statements in writing. One of the leaders in Wisconsin politics has never yet given me a statement unless he wrote it. I consider him wise for it.

Second, you can make sure by checking back that your interviewer gets his facts as you have given them to him and gets them down correctly. You can take a tip from wise attorneys. I think practically every attorney has at least one reporter friend. He can drop a tip to him regarding a

(Continued on page 10)

What does the scientist think of new

What does the newspaperman think ally adopt toward the press?

Is there some common basis on wh men can agree to cooperate—some ficulties arising from current contacts

THESE questions were considered in an u scientists and newspapermen through a the University of Wisconsin by the Wisconsin professional journalistic fraternity. The quest both groups ended the discussion with expr

Among the scientists participating in Steenbock, inventor of the process whereby Prof. Michael F. Guyer, authority on hered cist, and Dr. C. A. Harper, director of the V Newspapermen who spoke included Willar ent of the United Press, and William T. E Times.

Through the interest, cooperation and c the Wisconsin School of Journalism, and t sium, we are able to present a somewhat co meeting. Views not found in this issue of T issue.

We Talk to Ne

By DR. C. A. H

Director, Wisconsin State

IAM in a position between scientists and the general public. We have a good deal to do with newspaper reporters. It isn't the newspaper reporter who comes and sees you that sometimes gets you into difficulty, it is the one whom you don't see, but who uses his imagination.

When I was a medical student, the professor was lecturing on a student who had typhoid. There was a drug used to produce a certain degree of perspiration. The man's hair disappeared. When it came back, it was unexpectedly a very beautiful dark brown hair. As the result of news stories, the professor heard from all over the United States. I'll venture to say from that time on he had communications concerning the wonderful "discovery" that he had made.

Now, speaking as state public health

Difficulties in Dealing With Each Other

k of newspaper treatment of his work?

man think of the attitude scientists usually
?

is on which scientists and newspaper-
e—some plan that will avoid the dif-
contacts?

red in an unusually candid way by a group of
through a symposium conducted recently at
the Wisconsin chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, pro-
The question was explored to such depth that
with expressions of mutual understanding.
participating in the discussion were Prof. Harry
s whereby vitamins are ultra radiated in foods;
y on heredity; Prof. C. E. Mendenhall, physi-
or of the Wisconsin State Board of Health.
ded Willard R. Smith, Wisconsin correspond-
liam T. Evjue, editor, the Madison Capital

ation and courtesy of Prof. Chilton R. Bush, of
ism, and the men participating in the sym-
somewhat condensed, stenographic report of the
s issue of The Quill will be found in the March

to Newspapermen

R. C. A. HARPER

consin State Board of Health

officer, the newspaper has been very helpful to the boards of health, because it has been one of the greatest avenues of information to the general public on public health. We have gone wrong very rarely indeed.

I think usually the quotations going out have been correct. We favor giving to the public the practical applications worked out in the universities of the United States. It has proved so valuable that we have had with us during the last 18 years a practical newspaperman. When we have something that we want to give out, we state the facts to the gentleman. He puts it in newspaper style. I have discovered, in giving an article to the newspaper, that if you have one or two points outlined directly, the article

(Continued on page 10)

We Want Things Straight

By DR. HARRY STEENBOCK

Professor of Agricultural Chemistry
University of Wisconsin

I HAVE no quarrel with newspapermen or reporters. But I must say that my experiences in the last five or six years have been very varied in character. Some of them have been very pleasant, others very trying.

I think part of the difficulty that comes between the interviewee and the interviewer is the feeling of helplessness of the interviewee in the presence of a newspaperman. Every man who works in science feels that instinctively. Here is a tremendous organization of publicity and he realizes the power for good or bad that it has. He realizes, too, the helplessness when he comes to correct an impression which has gone out in the newspapers, if that impression is incorrect. You may try to minimize this.

To the publisher, the newspaper must be a success. But the scientist is also interested in making his work a success and in getting adequate returns on the many years of most diligent application invested in his work. The newspaperman has in his hands the power, when he releases a scoop, to wreck that scientist's career. You may not appreciate that.

THERE are, of course, different scientists who look at science in a different way—some from the commercial standpoint and desire publicity—some are concerned merely with what they call "searching for truth." You have normal, practical, queer individuals to deal with. On the average, all of these types feel their helplessness when it comes to protecting their own interests. The man in science may be about to make a discovery to prevent some pirates from putting a lot of patent medicines on the market. He may try to protect the public. The scientist has the public in mind, as well as himself. There also may be the scientist who is concerned solely with establishing his reputation as another Pasteur. And he is in the power of the reporters and press, who are about to make him—or ruin him if a little mistake is made.

The reporter says he has to have the information "right now," in a few minutes, so that he can get it at once to his paper and perhaps scoop a rival publication; but it is not right. How can you put a thing in writing in a short period of time? The reporter is not so interested in facts as he is in securing the attention of the public. The mere facts he usually finds necessary to dress up in some kind of fashion so they will "take."

From my own bitter experience, it seems that the things which have always taken hold strongly, and which the newspaper dwells on, are peculiarities and abnormalities. They may be in the normal run of news, but it is the whole attitude of the newspaper toward scientific findings. When a man gets in that position he feels he is helpless. Cooperation is impossible.

I HAVE little fault to find with the newspaperman. I have a lot to find with the publisher, who is after dollars and cents or who is existing for political reasons. What is the use of trying to deal with a man of that nature? There again the man in science is totally helpless. He has no \$100,000 plant to protect. He is totally helpless and gives it up as a bad job. That kind of situation is not going to clear the way for you as newspapermen.

I have told you we feel helpless. I must say that we also feel sorry. "I've got to have a story," says the reporter. He knows nothing about the subject. If I were put in that position, I would not give ten cents for that discovery. I frequently feel sorry for the reporter, because I realize the position he is in. What to do about it, I don't know. I think, on both sides, those who are really active in the game and are essential to publicity are the men who have things right at heart. You, as men who report, want to get things straight. Scientists want to get things straight. Here is this big organ of publicity, entirely warped financially and otherwise, with a tremendous

(Continued on page 10)

Our Intentions Are Good We Talk to Newspapermen

(Continued from page 8)

case that is pending and it makes a story before it ever is in the court records. I think if you didn't back away, but met reporters fairly, you would find that they could be trusted. For some months I have been treasuring a story regarding some work being carried on by the Alumni Research Foundation. It is a secret between someone and myself.

I think you'll find that reporters as a class are that way if you'll just learn it for yourself. I think you'll find that confidences are received and kept as much as in any other business.

THERE is the case where the reporter has some facts on a special piece of research and he goes to the man doing it and wants the whole story. I would advise you to give it to him, because if you don't he has editors over him, city editors, clamoring, "Why don't you get that story?" He's out to get it. If he can't get it from you he can trail every possible source so that he can get something printed on it. If he is going to write it on the basis of a few facts, he should get all of it. I realize that sometimes this would be dangerous. The best thing is a discussion with the reporter. Your pledge of cooperation when a story is ready for release is going to prompt him to hold it. He can go back to the office and explain it.

I might also advise that you don't ignore a reporter that tries to get a story by 'phone. These are days of depression. Offices are short-handed, and the reporter has many assignments. If he is in a hurry to get something on the same subject that has appeared in a competitor's paper, he grabs the 'phone the first thing. If he is on something new, invite him to your office. It is to your interest and to his. The story will be more accurate. You can have a feeling of satisfaction that he is going away with the facts and that he probably can't go wrong. The reporter wants to do right by you. We feel that sometimes griefs have been caused just as much by your backing away.

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(Continued from page 9)

will be best suited for newspaper purposes.

OUR articles go out to all the weekly papers and dailies also. We, of course, have an immense amount of material. I know it is a big educational factor as far as the public is concerned. If there is an unusual technical side that might be misinterpreted, the publicity man writes the article and we see it before it goes out. It has worked out very satisfactorily. I have had newspapermen come in, interested in conditions outside of scientific facts, interested in the administration of certain problems. Newspapermen will come in and we tell them, "These are the plain facts, these are conditions and surrounding elements. We don't want them published." They have maintained the confidence we have entrusted with them in every respect.

There are many things that get into the press that are not the fault of the newspaper or the reporter. These come from the man who wants publicity. The cancer proposition is one. I think we answer on the average some communication every week asking about cancer cures—sometimes dozens a week. Anyone suggesting a cure for cancer seems to get the publicity before the people and then they try to get the facts, to see whether such a thing is actually true. That is very serious, because in a person afflicted with cancer, it arouses false hopes. I have known many people who have spent hundreds and thousands of dollars trying to accomplish a recovery from an incurable disease, cancer, from some person in the United States who claims he can cure cancer.

We Want Things Straight

(Continued from page 9)

overhead. But you have the index as to what the public wants and you have to give the public what it wants.

I think also, then, another difficulty is this tremendous urge for speed. Accuracy first is the motto in science, not speed. If speed comes before everything else, you are going to get the kind of a thing that speed produces.

A man comes into my office, he wants a story, he wants it at once. He never thinks that I have a day's routine as he does. That work has to be done. The newspaper man wants a

story. Can I come down tomorrow for an hour? Here I am in a State institution, give us the facts. You give such time as you have to give. Your colleagues in scientific work may resent your giving information to the press. Hardly a man in science looks on his work as his own. He looks on his work as a contribution, to which others will add.

Let me take the other side of the position. This individual tries to represent other individuals and speak for them. Should not he be condemned by his fellow scientists, who have tried to work with him, who may have contributed more than himself? I can see many difficulties in the set-ups as we find them now.

I've Been Writing for Boys

(Continued from page 5)

out tabulation would be out of the question here.

Aside from learning the elements of juvenile plotting and structure, the matter of finding plots has always been my potential Waterloo. Young readers are quick to detect the "made" story, and to inject reality into a hand-turned plot is no small task. At first I relied upon straight formula, but this brought a stereotyped tone to my copy and the editors were not cordial. Nowadays I operate more along these lines, both Q and A being represented by myself:

Q. What magazine is in line for some of your copy?

A. The *Haversack* should be able to use something about now.

Q. What was your last yarn for them?

A. A South Sea serial—"Cache of the Atoll."

Q. What do you want this time?

A. Exotic setting, say the Malay Peninsula. One greenhorn and one old-timer.

Q. Of course. Know anything about Malaya?

A. Four anthropology texts, two modern political books and several magazines articles' worth.

Q. Well, what *could* happen in the exact setting you've selected?

And so it goes. I outline to myself the adventure probabilities, tie in several others as minor developments after selecting one theme as the major basis of the plot, and, as often as not, leave the final climax to grow out of the natural and logical course of events.

THE BOOK BEAT

Conducted by MITCHELL V. CHARNLEY

All About Magazines

MAGAZINE PUBLISHING, by Lenox R. Lohr. The Williams & Wilkins Company, Baltimore. 1932. \$4.00.

Lenox R. Lohr, a Cornell College graduate in mechanical engineering who achieved fame as a military engineer in the World War, spent seven years after the war as editor and publisher of *The Military Engineer*, journal of the Society of American Military Engineers. Schools of journalism are mainly for newspaper training, he found, and there are books to cover every phase of the subject. But, although there are more magazines than newspapers, magazine editors and business managers have not been so favored. Another species of the "forgotten man," if you please.

A good engineer, Maj. Lohr tackled

the publishing problem from the engineering viewpoint. His instincts led him to investigate both the practical and technical phases of the profession, and to reach outside for an understanding of those other arts and industries upon which the publisher must depend. Then, expecting to withdraw from editorial work, he set down his findings for his successor.

In 328 pages Maj. Lohr, as Rufus C. Dawes, head of Chicago's Century of Progress Exposition, points out in a glowing foreword, makes it possible and easy for others to profit by his experience. It is not a book to be read from cover to cover. It is a classified manual intended not so much for the professional as for the great army of persons elected or appointed to magazine positions for a relatively short time. Its eight chapters cover organization and management, the editorial side, illustrations, paper and ink, printing, advertising, circulation and postal procedure.—Albert W. Bates, Executive Secretary, Sigma Delta Chi.

TECHNOCRACY TIPS

AT least two books and innumerable magazine and newspaper pieces are available to help you understand the theory of Technocracy.

The books: "The Engineers and the Price System," by the late Thorstein Veblen, famed economist and scientist who was one of the original members of Technocracy. Written in 1920, the book has been recently reissued by Viking. It describes the theories on which the "Energy Survey of North America" originated. . . . "In Place of Profit," by Harry F. Ward (Scribner's), discusses the price system and asks the important question: "Why will men work when their food and shelter are provided and where every one is treated alike?"

The shorter pieces are legion. Perhaps the best short exposition of Technocracy is the lead article in the January *Harper's*, prepared under the direction of Technocracy's leader, Howard Scott. Al Smith's *New Outlook* is having a series of articles on Technocracy by Wayne Parrish—it began in November. "What Is Technocracy?" is the title of a piece by Edmund Chaffee in the January 14 *Christian Century*. Harold Ward writes "In Defense of Technocracy" in the January 11 *New Republic*. Simeon Strunsky attacks the figures of Technocracy, if not its basic theory, in the *New York Times Magazine* for January 8. . . . There are many others. And a list like this becomes out of date the instant it is written, for the subject is still a vital one.—M. V. C.

Three-Dimensional Geography

VAN LOON'S GEOGRAPHY, by Hendrik Willem Van Loon. Simon and Schuster, New York. 1932. \$3.75.

Tales of the Russian peasant who has never gone beyond the confines of his own village are amusing to us pseudo-sophisticates until someone comes along and shows us how close to the peasant we are in our ignorance of this spinning speck of star-dust.

Van Loon does this. One of those rare combinations of student and graphic writer, he has combined in his geography the essential facts of geology and history to make a running narrative of how seas, mountains, ocean streams, rivers, natural resources, and the influence of other planets affect man, the thinking animal. He pushes back the mental horizon with an effectiveness few writers achieve.

He outlines his book thus: "Man comes first in this geography. His physical environment and background come next. The rest is given whatever space remains."

To satisfy his own exuberance and to avoid the possibility of another artist's miffing the ball, Van Loon drew

the illustrations for his *Geography*. The pictures are simple, dynamic; there are two- and three-dimension maps, views from every conceivable perspective, and pictures of such possibilities as "If the English Channel should run dry."

And, in addition to acquainting you with Noodle, Dachshund prodigy, Van Loon leavens the book with rare Dutch quips.—Steve McDonough, Des Moines Bureau, the *Associated Press*.

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WHO «» WHAT «» WHERE

ROBERT C. (RED) BARTON, telegraph editor of The Springfield (O.) *Daily News*, is the father of twins, a boy and a girl, born at the new Springfield City Hospital on Armistice Day, November 11. They were named Elizabeth Jane and Robert James. Mrs. Barton formerly was Miss Alice Moomaw, of South Bend, Ind. Mr. Barton attended Miami University, Oxford, O., and later Indiana University, from which institution he was graduated in 1928. He is a member of the Indiana Chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalistic fraternity. Mrs. Barton also was graduated from Indiana University in 1930.

WINSTON PHELPS (Columbia '31), Pulitzer scholar for 1931-32, has left his position as an instructor at the Columbia University School of Journalism and is now on the copy desk of the Providence (R. I.) *Journal*.

HON. YOSHIO MUTO, imperial Japanese consul at Chicago, and THOMAS TEMPLE HOYNE, author, newspaperman and financial authority, were guest speakers at a dinner for members of the Chicago Alumni chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalistic fraternity, at the Medinah Athletic Club, Chicago, November 16. Introductions were by HOWARD W. CLARK (Grinnell Associate), editor, *Mid-Western Banker* and president of the alumni chapter, and by LUTHER A. HUSTON (Washington Associate), news manager, central division, International News Service.

L. BERNARD KILGORE (DePauw '29), for three years news editor of the Pacific Coast edition of the *Wall Street Journal*, San Francisco, has been transferred to New York where he will write a daily interpretive column for the main edition of the paper. ROBERT I. BOTTORFF (DePauw '29), of the copy desk, succeeded him. Kilgore visited his family and friends in South Bend and Indianapolis en route to New York.

GEORGE B. PARKER (Oklahoma Associate), editor-in-chief, Scripps-Howard Newspapers, addressed the annual meeting of the Virginia Press Association at Roanoke in January.

PAUL BELLAMY (Ohio State Associate), managing editor of the Cleveland (O.) *Plain Dealer*, was elected president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors by directors of the society at their recent meeting in Washington, D. C. Mr. Bellamy, who has been managing editor of the *Plain Dealer* since 1920 and first vice-president of the society since 1930,

will fill out the unexpired portion of the term of FRED FULLER SHEDD (National Honorary), editor, Philadelphia, (Pa.) *Evening Bulletin*, which ends at the annual convention next April.

Mr. Shedd resigned before completing his second term as president in order to devote more time to his editorial duties and his journalism class work at Pennsylvania State College. His resignation was accepted with regret by the board. A. H. KIRCHHOFER (Syracuse Associate), managing editor, Buffalo (N. Y.) *Evening News*, is secretary of the society and will continue in that capacity while GROVE PATTERSON, editor, Toledo (O.) *Blade*, will become first vice-president to succeed Mr. Bellamy.

SIGMA DELTA CHI NOTICE

An alumnus of Sigma Delta Chi, who is a subscriber to THE QUILL sent in from Indianapolis, Ind., on January 9, a blank alumni dues bill with payment in currency. No return address was given on the envelope. The member is requested to identify himself to National Headquarters of Sigma Delta Chi, 836 Exchange Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

GEORGE C. LLOYD (Butler '31) recently was appointed secretary and assistant to Harrison C. MacDonald, nationally known classified advertising promoter. He will live in Lafayette, Ind.

MARTIN CODEL (Michigan '24) is editor of *Broadcasting*, the semi-monthly "news magazine of the fifth estate," published at Washington, D. C.

TIPS FOR WRITERS

The Topics Publishing Company, 330 W. 42nd Street, New York City, has started a new publication, the *Food Field Reporter*, a newspaper designed for manufacturers in the food industry. Dan Rennick, managing editor, announces that all news concerning the activities of manufacturers of food and grocery products will be accepted from correspondents at the rate of one cent a word "providing, of course, that the same item has not been sent previously." The same company also publishes *Drug Topics*, a magazine for retail druggists; the *Wholesale Druggist*, devoted to the wholesale drug trade; the *Drug Trade News*, a newspaper for manufacturers of drug store products and their advertising agencies, and *Display Topics*, a magazine devoted to druggists' window and store displays.

LEWIS WALLACE (South Carolina '32) is editing the Lake City (S. C.) *News*.

LEROY WANT (South Carolina '32) is operating his own newspaper service in South Carolina and is correspondent for several state dailies.

W. C. HERBERT (South Carolina '32) is on the reportorial staff of the Columbia (S. C.) *Record*, afternoon daily.

JOHN H. MUNROE (Minnesota '24), formerly managing editor of the *Walsh County Record*, Grafton, N. D., recently purchased the *Walhalla* (N. D.) *Mountaineer*, of which he is now editor and publisher.

WALTER T. HANSON (Iowa '30) has been appointed editor of the Hancock (Mich.) *Evening Copper Journal*.

SAMUEL STEINMAN (Wisconsin '32), president last year of the University of Wisconsin chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalistic fraternity, has been placed in charge of the Somerville (N. J.) bureau of the Plainfield (N. J.) *Courier-News*.

MEREDITH NICHOLSON (DePauw Associate), Hoosier author and former newspaper editor, headed the committee in charge of the inauguration of Governor Paul McNutt, of Indiana.

HENRY M. FLOWERS (Indiana '28) was married on Christmas Day to Miss Ethel Roberson, of Fort Wayne. The couple resides in Fort Wayne where Flowers is on the reportorial staff of the *News-Sentinel*.

JOSEPH ATOR (Illinois '24) has joined the reportorial staff of the Chicago (Ill.) *Tribune*.

The Truckee (Calif.) *Republican*, weekly edited and published by STANLEY BAVIER (Stanford Associate) and one helper, has been widely applauded for its achievement in delivering to Truckee subscribers an extra edition covering the death of Calvin Coolidge within 25 minutes of receipt of the death flash. Truckee is a mountain winter resort located near Lake Tahoe. Mr. Bavier was a contributor to THE QUILL for January.

WILL G. RAY (Grinnell Associate), former president of the Iowa Press Association, has returned to his position as coeditor and copublisher of the Grinnell (Ia.) *Herald* after a long illness.

So Passes the Polemiste

(Continued from page 3)

journalism the race is becoming extinct.

Voltaire would have made an excellent newspaper *polémiste*, as regards both matter and style. He aimed high, even at the highest; despite his cynicism, it would seem that he was convinced to the end that he had trounced God. Half a century after Voltaire, Paul Louis Courier wrote pamphlets that irked the throne and lodged him in jail. Had the daily paper with large circulation existed in their day, Voltaire and Courier would have led the way for Louis Veuillot, the Catholic; Henri Rochefort, the irreconcilable; Paul de Cassagnac, the Bonapartist; Edouard Drumont, the anti-Semite; Laurent Tailhade, the diletante anarchist, and Léon Daudet, the Royalist, all *polémistes* of the first order. To their names should be added those of Georges Clemenceau, the Jacobin of the first manner and the patriot of the second; Léon Bloy, the mystic, and Octave Mirbeau, the iconoclast, who were *polémistes* intermittently.

OF all these, the truest to type was Victor Henri, Marquis of Rochefort-Luçay, who discarded his title to become plain Henri Rochefort, the journalist. After having helped to make Napoleon III totter, he lived long enough to be a thorn in the side of all the cabinets which followed in such swift succession in the first 40 years of the Third Republic. Being against all parties, he had no label of his own. The name of his principal paper typified the man—*L'Intransigeant*.

Rochefort's vicissitudes were many—duels, deportation, exiles. Yet except for the years spent in the penal settlement in New Caledonia for moral support of the Commune insurrection of 1871, he wrote a daily diatribe for one or other of his successive sheets. Notwithstanding police rigors, his copy found its way from London or Brussels to the printer in Paris. And Parisians took Rochefort to their hearts because they have always loved the men who bait the powers that be.

Coercion made Rochefort pass from irony to virulence. And as coercion continued, whatever the régime, the virulence waxed so strong that in his *Dictionnaire des Contemporains* honest Gustave Vapereau was driven to depart from his wonted composure when he came to Rochefort; he referred to "the enormity of his imputa-

tions and the unrestrained freedom of his vocabulary."

THE quotation from Vapereau is essential to this article because it throws light on one aspect of the *polémiste*. By the force of things he tends to become an eternal accuser. At first he may strive to gather evidence, but as the imputations increase in enormity, as inevitably they must do, he strives no longer, for obviously there is no evidence. So that the *polémiste* comes to generalize always. In all ages some public men have been revealed as venal or immoral. Under the pen of the *polémiste* all public men—all those whom he attacks, that is—are venal or immoral or both. By dint of iteration "he relates what he thinks as what he knows," as Samuel Johnson described the process, while simultaneously conviction is brought to the mind of many a reader.

"This scoundrel of a Minister," wrote Rochefort one day, "brought his poor grieving mother to an untimely grave." The "enormity of the imputation" was such that the Minister saw fit to make it known that his mother was still living. Whereupon Rochefort, unabashed, "rectified" thus: "I am told that the scoundrel Minister's mother is not dead; it must have been his father whom he killed." Evidently silence was the better part; the "scoundrel" said no more. Small wonder that half Paris for years bought *L'Intransigeant* "just to see what Rochefort has to say today." He died at 83, a *polémiste* to the last.

Paul de Cassagnac, Rochefort's contemporary, shared his popularity. His sheet, *L'Autorité*, like *L'Intransigeant*, was vapid apart from the polemical article, invariably printed in large type in the first column of the front page. For the rest, the papers were mere padding. It was the daily onslaught that sold them, the string of epithets, the "enormous imputations."

LATER, with changing public taste, this was not enough. The reader began to expect news in addition to shadow boxing. But the evolution towards the journals of today was arrested by the Dreyfus Affair. Who cared for news in this orgy of scandal, of slander, of charge and counter-charge? Papers sold only for "The fresh coined lie, the secret whispered last" and *polémistes* thrived exceedingly.

Threatened on all hands by the

columnists, who were invented in France when *Le Matin* introduced H. Harduin, their swan song was heroic. So many targets offered that one *polémiste* could not shoot enough bolts. Polemical gladiators entered the arena in squads. Satellites gravitated round incisive Clemenceau in *L'Aurore*, round Jew-baiting Drumont in *La Libre Parole*, round Latin-quoting Tailhade in *L'Action*.

After all this turbulence, after such strong fare, the reader was satiated. He yearned for lighter things. While the old-school *polémistes* continued to perform before dwindling audiences, Gustave Téry sought to satisfy new tastes. In *L'Oeuvre*, first weekly then daily, he allied the *polémiste* with the humorist. His great discovery was G. de La Fouchardière, in whose work the humorist dominates. At the same time Léon Daudet was girding his loins, possibly foreseeing that he alone would be left to hold the banner aloft.

THE war dealt the final blow to the *polémistes*. Clemenceau might symbolize protests by making his "*Freeman*" the "*Man in Chains*," the Censor was mightier than the pen. With the plea of "sacred union" all critics were silenced. And when peace came the public smiled at verbal battles coming after four years of *communiqués*. It turned to the papers giving news and "human interest."

Despite his outward earnestness, even Léon Daudet at times seems to write with his tongue in his cheek. His opponents call him "the King's jester" in allusion to his Royalist tenets, but none denies him talent. His hold over the Royalist youth is great. But times have changed and *L'Action Française* does not make its bid on a *polémiste* alone. Charles Maurras, unrivaled as a casuist, expounds the party doctrine each day and the criticisms of arts and letters are among the best in France.

Last of the *polémistes*, Daudet is certainly not the least. Indeed, the mantles of all his forerunners seem to have fallen on him. He is rotund enough to wear them all. He can lash out with the best of them; after all these years he can still coin new expletives; and he enters into the daily fray with a zest that astonishes.

The passing of the *polémistes* is matter for regret. It marks the loss of yet more individuality in this standardized world.

SCIENTISTS, SCRIBES AND SYMPOSIUMS

SCIENTISTS and newspapermen have had difficulties for years in understanding each other. Both have been at fault in failing to recognize and appreciate their respective fields and attitudes.

Barriers have been broken down somewhat in recent years, however, as some newspaper editors, recognizing the awakened interest of their readers in things scientific, set men to work understanding and interpreting what was being done in research laboratories. Many highly interesting stories have resulted.

Only the surface has been scratched, however, insofar as most newspapers are concerned. Although services, men and opportunities have been at hand, their attention to science copy has lagged.

As Leigh Matteson, science editor of International News Service, observed in the January issue of *THE QUILL*, "Science reporting is still in its beginning in the production of a steady stream of immensely interesting and greatly amusing news, in addition to 'important' news. Every editor should be able, eventually, to perceive the possibility of relating plant, insect, animal and bacterial life to human affairs. There is where the growing interest of the public in science is developed."

RECOGNIZING the need for a better understanding between scientists and newspapermen, the Wisconsin chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, professional journalistic fraternity, recently conducted a unique meeting in which recognized scientists and the newspapermen were called together for a candid discussion of mutual problems.

Things said at that meeting are presented in part in this issue of *THE QUILL*. The remarks, we feel, will be of interest to scientists and newspapermen everywhere. Perhaps the Wisconsin experiment will lead to similar meetings elsewhere of newspapermen and scientists, and of newspapermen and those in other fields such as law, finance, industry and politics.

As for the educational aspects of the symposium plan,

Prof. Chilton R. Bush, of the School of Journalism at the University of Wisconsin, remarks:

"The Wisconsin chapter of Sigma Delta Chi, after some experience, has developed the symposium into an important professional activity. In the opinion of some newspapermen and teachers of journalism, it ranks in effectiveness ahead of classroom instruction. It proceeds on the principle that truth can be expressed only in dialogue (as Renan said).

SCIENTISTS, judges, publicity men or advertisers are brought face to face with newspapermen in a frank discussion that, in the course of the evening, explores every aspect of the question or practice under consideration. Professional men in active work thus reveal their attitudes, their professional codes, and the special limitations under which their work is done, and the whole discussion is given a social setting. Undergraduate students, who attend and participate, are able to have their questions answered in a concrete way and not by textbooks and teachers. The discussion, moreover, opens up lines of thought that might never occur to the prospective journalists—or even to the working journalists and the lay groups.

"The Wisconsin chapter is enthusiastic about the results of the numerous symposiums it has conducted, and believes one way has been found by which to answer the criticisms directed toward modern higher education as represented in the universities with their mass-education methods.

"In a sense, the symposium is a revival of the medieval type of university in which the students elected their teachers and subjects, administered the details of teaching, and put their teachers 'on the spot' whenever there was no meeting of minds. It is quite possible—now that universities have installed physical facilities, such as student union buildings with private dining rooms, etc.—that the coming university will consist of libraries, laboratories, and platforms, but will have fewer classrooms and less formal teaching."

AS THEY VIEW IT

DURING recent years the public taste in Sunday feature articles, as interpreted by the editors of leading newspapers throughout the country, has undergone a decided change and there is plenty of evidence supporting the belief that as the clouds of depression roll away the newer trend will be emphasized on a remarkably broader scale.

"Briefly, the experience is that editors and public are demanding a Sunday feature of considerably more substance than heretofore has been the case.

"There is noticeable and distinct reaction away from Sunday features of the stock pattern, confined to sensationalized subjects or inconsequential topics puffed to page size on the basis of a few catchy facts.

"If the editors of many outstanding journals in small as well as large communities are reading public demand aright—and there is every reason to believe they are—the trend in Sunday features without question is toward increasingly 'sound' articles carefully written and effectively bulwarked by facts.

"However, editors emphasize strongly that while Sunday features are moving upward in quality they must not sacrifice entertainment value. In other words, mere 'heaviness' is not now and will not in the future be a substitute for that conventional piece of merchandise which one generally recognizes under the label of 'Sunday mag stuff.'

"Rather, a skillful blending of entertainment and sound, factual information is going to be demanded on a far wider scale by newspapers in all circulation groups. That trend is unmistakable."—Herbert S. Hollander, managing editor, the Ullman Feature Service, Washington, D. C., in the *American Press*.

SEVERAL things anyone ought to do if he gets the idea of owning a weekly paper in a rural community. First, he ought to read at least five good books about the subject. Second, he ought to see what the inside of a weekly shop looks like. Third, he needs to get some 'try-out' experience in the work, and this ought to be under an editor who has no regard for anything but merit. Fourth, he should candidly analyze himself to see whether or not he has the necessary educational qualifications, both in writing, and in business. And finally, he should take six months in which to think it all over, and to see whether he really would enjoy living among farmers and small-town people. It's the last chance to avoid a failure for himself, an imposition on the public faith, and an embarrassment to the profession."—Charles L. Allen, Assistant Professor of Journalism, University of Illinois, and publisher of the *Fisher (Ill.) Reporter*, in *National Printer Journalist*.

Chemists Have a Word for It

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